



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

ART. X.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Life of Napoleon*. By BARON JOMINI, General-in-Chief and Aide-de-Camp to the Emperor of Russia. Translated from the French, with Notes, by H. W. HALLECK, LL.D., Major-General United States Army; Author of "Elements of Military Art and Science"; "International Law, and the Laws of War," &c., &c. With an Atlas. New York: D. Van Nostrand. London: Trübner & Co. 1864. 4 vols. 8vo.

THE merit and importance of this work in its original language are well known to the students of military history and of the art of war. It is the history of the wars of the greatest commander of modern times, if not of all time, written by a man whose fitness for the task, by the qualities of his mind, his acquirements, and his position, was unequalled. It must continue to possess a high value so long as the career of the great soldier, statesman, legislator, and emperor shall continue to be an object of interest to mankind. Hitherto the work has not received in England and America that study and attention it deserves, from the fact, it may be, that, until the translation by Major-General Halleck, which has just appeared in four handsome volumes, there had been no English version of the work.

General Halleck introduces his translation with a sketch of the life and writings of Jomini. He was born in the Canton of Vaud, Switzerland, in 1779. His education was partly military and partly commercial. At the age of nineteen, he received an appointment to the staff of Keller. For many years he served Napoleon, and for many subsequent years the Emperor of Russia, in the most confidential and important staff positions. He never had an assignment of troops, but his advice was most valuable to the powerful monarchs to whom he was successively attached. He has been a laborious student and a prolific author, and he occupies a distinguished position in the front rank of military historians. It is probably not going too far to say, that, in that small class of writers, he is not only unsurpassed, but that he has no equal.

General Jomini's Prologue represents a scene of commotion in the Elysian Fields in the month of May, 1821. The shades see their clear sky darkened, and hear the tumultuous noise of greedy Acheron. The unwonted sights and sounds convince them that some great shade is coming, and presently Napoleon appears. He is surrounded and greeted by the thronging multitudes, and then is questioned upon the great problems of his career by Alexander, Cæsar, and Frederick.

Napoleon's reply makes up the book before us. And in accordance with this clumsy fiction, the narrative is conducted throughout in the first person. Jomini's style is characterized by clearness, precision, and accuracy, but the interest which inseparably attaches to the treatment of such a subject by such an author is diminished by the great compression which the magnitude of his undertaking compelled him to practise.

In General Halleck's translation the sentences are well framed and well balanced, and the language is usually well chosen ; but it has not the clear conciseness of the original. Though the translation wants the last finish, it is respectably well done, and the defects of style are not numerous enough to interrupt disagreeably the attention of the reader. General Halleck informs us that his manuscript was prepared for and carried through the press by a friend, whom he does not name. It is evident that this friend is wanting in experience as a proof-reader, not to say in education. He has left the punctuation in a condition which is very frequently susceptible of improvement, and he has allowed some glaring errors to pass uncorrected. *Debauch* is an awkward mistake for *debouch*, and *enceinte* is constantly printed *enciente*. *Stragetie* for *strategic* is an error especially unworthy of a general's translation of a military work. Sometimes a word is permitted to retain its French form, as *combattants*, and sometimes the English form is allowed in a French phrase, as *Chef-de-Battalion*. The Italian name *Ventimiglia*, in French *Vintimille*, appears once as *Vintimilla* and once as *Vertemilla*. Such misprints as *Messena*, *Groza* for *Grossa*, *Carthagenians*, *maneuvers*, *assunder*, *were* for *where*, *division* for *divisions*, *defeats* for *defeat*, *striped* for *stripped*, are not uncommon. *Compromitted* is used repeatedly for *compromised*, and troops in action are said to be *sustained* by others, when *supported* is the appropriate word. Napoleon is represented as declaring that the French troops "lively pursued the retreating enemy." This peculiar phrase occurs more than once. Alvinzi advances "to raise the siege of Wurmser," as if Wurmser were a place, and not a general. Napoleon speaks of invading "the Carinthia." *La Carinthie* is good French, but it is not common to prefix the definite article in English to the name of a province. Other errors, which more gravely affect the sense, may also be owing to the carelessness of the translator's friend, but they will be noted in our remarks upon the merit of the translation.

Our long war is leading many Americans to read military books, and some to make a study of military matters. General Halleck's translation, therefore, appears at a good time. For the true soldier, and for the faithful student of the art and history of war, Jomini's work is a book

of very great value. But, even for this small class, it is not a book to begin with. To profit by it to any considerable degree, one should have a general knowledge of the campaigns of Napoleon, and a good acquaintance with the topography and geography of the countries in which he waged his wars. With such knowledge, and attentive study, the most important lessons may be learned from this book about the combinations and movements, the strategy and tactics, of the great master of the art of war. Without such knowledge, the mind of most readers will be confused by the incessant appearance of new names, both of places and of men, and the great compression which the author was obliged to practise will destroy all sense of the proportionate magnitude of the events which crowd his pages.

These general characteristics of the book almost deprive it of attraction for the general reader. The majority of that class of general readers who read for information will find that, owing to their own want of knowledge, they carry away so little from it that they will soon be ready to close it, and employ their time elsewhere to more immediate advantage. The men who read for pleasure may seize the book with avidity. There is no name more potent than that of Napoleon, and a certain vague interest has long been attached, in this country, to the name of the almost unknown Jomini. It has been rumored that he not only understood and wrote about such abstruse matters as strategy, grand tactics, and logistics, but that he had taken all military knowledge to be his province, and that in mastery of the theory of war he was not inferior to the great conqueror whom he served. It is natural for men to open his book as if they were entering a gallery hung with pictures of Arcola and Rivoli, of Marengo and Austerlitz, of Jena and Waterloo. There is some hope of hearing the guns of Nelson at Aboukir, of visiting the trenches of St. Jean d'Acre, of seeing the Pyramids from which the centuries looked down on the legions of France, or of bearing some of the hardships and exposures of the passage of the Alps. Alison, in his descriptions of battles, has taught us to taste the delights of picturesque and dramatic error, and Kinglake, in his "Invasion of the Crimea," has photographed for us the banks of the Alma, and led us on the field and through the ranks and among the guns and the horses, and found time, in the very crisis of the battle, to introduce us to generals and colonels, and even enlisted men, and has seen to it that the acquaintance should not stop with the introduction, but should by degrees ripen into intimacy. It is far different in this book. The drums and trumpets do not sound. The eagles do not glisten. The greatest battles are described in a few lines, or, at most, in a few paragraphs. It is very seldom that there is more than the

briefest description of the positions and movements of great bodies of troops. No pictures are presented to our eyes, and the story of Austerlitz is told wellnigh as dryly as if the author were developing a mathematical problem. But those who, 'desirous to understand the art of war, really study the book as it deserves, will be well repaid for their toil; and for them we have a few remarks to make on the character of General Halleck's translation.

The translation is generally faithful in substance, and successful in giving the spirit of the original, but it is not free from discreditable, and sometimes serious errors. This is a strong statement, and we therefore shall support it by numerous instances. It is true that some of the errors we shall note may be owing to the fault of the translator's friend, and not of the translator, but it is the merit of the book, and not of its makers, that is under consideration. These errors seem to be generally owing rather to carelessness than to ignorance, but they often affect the meaning.

In Vol. I. p. 99, we find Napoleon saying: "I marched . . . with my grenadiers *on* the divisions of Massena and Augereau." For *on* we should read *and*.

P. 103: "Before beginning new exploits I promised my soldiers to regulate the interior administration of Lombardy." This seems a very singular promise for an invading general to make to his victorious army. A reference to the original shows that these words are a mistranslation. There we find: *Avant de courir aux nouveaux exploits que je promettais à mes soldats, je donnai des soins à l'administration, &c.*

P. 111: "But, fortunately for us, Naples now produces no Hannibals." With this compare the original: *Heureusement ce n'était pas à Naples qu'il fallait, de nos jours, chercher un Annibal.*

P. 166: "such a clause is always eventual." These words mean little or nothing. The French is, *une pareille clause est toujours éventuelle*. *Éventuelle* means *contingent*, while *eventual* means *consequential*, *ultimate*, *final*.

P. 169: *Pour tourner de plus près la droite de l'archiduc*, is translated, "so as to turn nearer the right of the Archduke." Many readers would fail to understand that *turn* was the word governing *the right*.

P. 207: "Finally, we know that the English," &c. The use of the present tense here, where the original has *savions*, quite ruins the sense.

P. 234, Napoleon is made to say: "If my reputation had suffered any by the affair," &c.; a very inelegant and imperfect rendering of *Si ma réputation avait pu être faiblement obscurcie par, &c.*

P. 267: "The Cabinet of Vienna, more intent upon consolidating its power in Italy than in destroying the organized corps which had compromised us in the Grisons, had directed," &c. This is utterly unintelligible, not to say nonsensical. Jomini wrote: *Le Cabinet de Vienne, plus jaloux de se consolider en Italie que de détruire les corps organisés que nous avons compromis dans les Grisons, avait prescrit*, &c.

In the same paragraph, the march assigned to Bellegarde is made to appear as a duty left by him to the division of Haddick.

P. 268: "thinking to prevent." In French, *sentant qu'il devait empêcher*. Expectation is made to take the place of consciousness of necessity.

P. 272: "Merlin and Treilhard . . . completely contracted the feeble Laréveillère." These words have no meaning. The French verb is *entraînaient*, which means *controlled* or even *constrained*.

P. 321: "situated on an impregnable rock." Original: *situé dans une position inexpugnable*.

P. 328: "a rear-guard left by Ott at Marenga was routed." This is stronger than the French *en fut débusquée*, which means only *was dislodged* or *driven out*.

P. 329: "seemed not to wish a battle." Original: *semblait indiquer qu'il n'était point décidé à livrer bataille*. Here again the English expression is stronger than the original warrants.

P. 330: "Ott, having returned from Castel-Ceriolo, . . . threatens to take our right in reserve." There can be nothing in the way of mis-translation much worse than this. Jomini's language, in describing a critical moment in the battle of Marengo, is as follows: *Ott, ayant dépassé Castel-Ceriolo, menaçait de prendre à revers notre droite*; that is, Ott, having *passed*, or *advanced beyond*, Castel-Ceriolo (a place beyond the right of the French position), threatened to take our right *in reverse*.

P. 331: "But on the other wing we are less fortunate." *Mais, en revanche, sur ma gauche elles* (i. e. *mes affaires*) *vont au plus mal*. This means "as badly as possible."

P. 331: "his centre is pierced, and his entire corps is driven back on San Giuliano." This is to the French something as the Southern to the Northern account of a Federal success: *son centre est enfoncé, et tout son corps, mis en désordre, se trouve vivement poussé sur San Giuliano*.

P. 331: "to prolonging the movement of retreat on the left." The word "prolonging" is ill chosen; the French word is *ralentir*, which means to *slacken*, to *abate the speed*. The whole sentence

beginning "The enemy, after a short halt," is weakly and imperfectly translated.

P. 333: "The column is broken, the head, cut off and surrounded, surrenders." The French reads thus: *La colonne ébranlée se pelotonne, la tête, entourée et enfoncée, finit par mettre bas les armes*; that is to say, The shaken column breaks, and its head, surrounded and overwhelmed, finally lays down its arms.

P. 335: "a brilliant and timely charge of the cavalry." The French for this is feebly translated. It is, *une charge de cavalerie faite à propos et à l'improviste*.

P. 335. On this short page of only three lines is found another mistake, unworthy of a scholar. "The Austrians . . . fight in retreat." The French is, *Les Autrichiens . . . battent en retraite*, that is, *fall back*, or *retreat*. The translator seems to have mistaken the phrase for *se battent en retraite*.

P. 337: "reaches." French, *se replie à*, i. e. "falls back to."

P. 339: "The Cabinet of Vienna sent to me M. St. Julien." This should be "sent back." The French is *renvoya*. The use of the word *sent* puzzles the reader of the preceding paragraph.

P. 360: "Nelson replied by the signal for deadly combat." A very weak translation of *répondit par le signal de combat à mort*.

P. 363: "this recession of two thirds of the debt." The original of this ill-chosen word is *annulation*, which means *abatement*, or *cancellation*.

Vol. II. p. 132: "anticipate the enemy's project." The original has *déjouer*, which means to *baffle* or *thwart*.

P. 134: "the emperor's and the general head-quarters." French, *les empereurs et le quartier-général*. The careless admission of the apostrophe quite changes the sense, and drives the Emperor of Austria or of Russia from the mind of the reader.

P. 134: "The reports of my guards." French, *Les rapports des grands-gardes*. Napoleon's guards and his grand-guards occupied very different positions.

Pp. 135, 136: "But to give it success required something more than the action of this isolated left." These words do not correspond to the original: *Mais, pour qu'il réussît, il ne fallait pas isoler cette gauche agissante*.

P. 137: "Lannes moves with equal rapidity." Original, *Lannes marche à la même hauteur*; i. e. "on the same line."

P. 137: "to march and dispute";—a careless mistake, of some importance. The French reads, *pour masquer et disputer*.

P. 138: "disposed *en croisement*." This is a very curious and puz-

zling error. The original is, *disposées en croissant*, i. e. "in the form of a crescent." The translator seems to have coined a new French phrase to interpret an old and familiar one to American readers.

P. 139: "the Russian generals." French, *gardes russes*. Another grave error, from mere carelessness.

P. 140: "at Austerlitz." French, *d'Austerlitz*, i. e. *from Austerlitz*. The reader will see that the difference is important.

P. 140: "to cope with the enemy." French, *pour achever l'ennemi*, i. e. to *despatch, dispose of*.

P. 142: "roads which . . . the frost rendered almost impassable." French, *le dégel*, i. e. *thaw*.

P. 142. The paragraph beginning, "The position of the enemy," is unlike the original, from omissions and errors too numerous for mention, except the serious error of speaking of Davoust as able to "advance to Goeding," where the French means "get to Goeding before the enemy."

P. 143: "negotiations were to be resumed"; *des négociateurs (durant) se réunir*, i. e. "commissioners were to meet."

The Translator's Preface describes the translation as "almost literal, only a few paragraphs being slightly condensed. These relate to subjects which at the present time are of very little interest." We must therefore attribute in part to carelessness the not infrequent omissions, of which we shall offer a few specimens.

Vol. I. p. 317: "The Austrian general, who had an army three times as numerous as that of the French," &c. In the original, the words *dans l'état de Gènes* follow the words thus translated, and are omitted from the translation.

Vol. II. p. 133. The words *cette tournée donna lieu à un des événements les plus touchants de ma vie*, after "he would not have put any faith in it," are not translated at all, perhaps because General Halleck thought them not in keeping with the general dryness of the book; and perhaps we may trace to the same feeling the numerous changes in the striking description of Napoleon's ride through his lines, on the night before Austerlitz, by which the picturesqueness of one of the few picturesque passages in the book is toned down.

P. 138: "Kamenski's brigade, . . . assailed on its right flank, succeeds in re-establishing their affairs for a moment." It seems strange that a single brigade, assailed on its flank, should do this, but, turning to the original, we find words omitted. Jomini wrote, *La brigade Kamenski, . . . assaillée ainsi, &c., vient réunir ses efforts à ceux de Kutusoff, et rétablir un moment les affaires*.

P. 141. The words *où il se trouvait engagé* are omitted in the translation, after the words "escape from the trap."

The fact stated in the Preface, that "it is very difficult to procure a copy [of Jomini's *Life of Napoleon*] in French," gives this translation a certain value. But a pretty careful examination of more than half the four volumes, and a comparison of much of their contents with the original, has detected so many inaccuracies, errors, and omissions, as to leave us with the impression that every one who has access to a library which contains the original will do better to consult or read that than to use the translation.

The volume of maps which accompanies the translation is composed of A. K. Johnston's reduction from the originals of Jomini, and seems to be admirable in every particular.

2. — *Essays on Fiction*. By NASSAU W. SENIOR. London. 1864.

WE opened this work with the hope of finding a general survey of the nature and principles of the subject of which it professes to treat. Its title had led us to anticipate some attempt to codify the vague and desultory canons, which cannot, indeed, be said to govern, but which in some measure define, this department of literature. We had long regretted the absence of any critical treatise upon fiction. But our regret was destined to be embittered by disappointment.

The title of the volume before us is a misnomer. The late Mr. Senior would have done better to call his book *Essays on Fictions*. *Essays on the Novelists*, even, would have been too pretentious a name. For in the first place, Mr. Senior's novelists are but five in number; and in the second, we are treated, not to an examination of their general merits, but to an exposition of the plots of their different works. These *Essays*, we are told, appeared in four of the leading English Reviews at intervals from the year 1821 to the year 1857. On the whole, we do not think they were worth this present resuscitation. Individually respectable enough in their time and place, they yet make a very worthless book. It is not necessarily very severe censure of a magazine article to say that it contains nothing. Sandwiched between two disquisitions of real merit, it may subsist for a couple of weeks upon the accidental glory of its position. But when half a dozen empty articles are bound together, they are not calculated to form a very substantial volume. Mr. Senior's papers may incur the fate to which we are told that inanimate bodies, after long burial, are liable on exposure to the air, — they crumble into nothing. Much better things have been said on these same authors than anything Mr. Senior has given us. Much wiser *dicta* than his lie buried in the dusty files of the minor periodicals. His remarks are